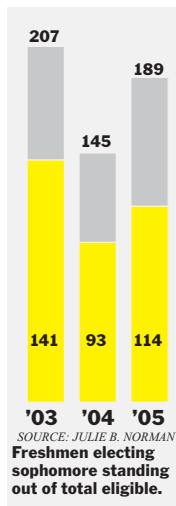


114 Frosh Get Soph. Standing

By Beckett W. Sterner
NEWS EDITOR

About a tenth of the freshman class has declared sophomore standing, consistent with the fraction that has done so since the 2003 elimination of Pass/No Record grading in spring term of freshman year.

A total of 189 freshmen qualified to become sophomores a term early, and 114 elected to do so, said Julie B. Norman, associate dean of the Academic Resources Center. Sophomore standing allows first-years to choose a major and receive an advisor early, and it also removes the credit limit. It also puts students on regular grading



Sophomore Standing, Page 14

Local Phone Service to Cost \$17 a Month

By Beckett W. Sterner
NEWS EDITOR

MIT students living in dormitories will have to pay a monthly fee of \$17 if they want to place or receive local, off-campus calls next year.

The policy change is a consequence of MIT's housing system no longer receiving a subsidy from the general operating budget, which paid for much of the cost of providing local phone service for students.

That, combined with the fact that many students rely more and more on their cell phones, led administrators to decide to make the service an optional cost on top of rent.

"Because so many student have cell phones now, the usage of the phones in the rooms is declining, and housing was concerned that the money being spent to pay for the phones that weren't being used could be put to other purposes, such as heat," said Allison F. Dolan, director of telephony in Information Services & Technology.

Under the new system, all dormitory rooms will still have phones which will be able to make and receive calls to and from on-campus numbers, which include the MIT police and other dormitories.

To make local calls or to receive any calls from off campus, however,



LIANG HONG

DISCONNECTED – Beginning next September, MIT plans to charge students \$17 for dormitory telephone service beyond the campus.

students will have to sign up for local service separately. MIT's service for placing long-distance calls will remain unchanged and separate from the local service.

"Students will need to get cell phones or get the plan," said Associate Dean of Housing Karen A.

Nilsson.

Budget shift ups phone prices

The current cost of the phone service students receive for free comes to a total of \$20 a month, of which \$3 is for on-campus service and \$17 is for outgoing local calls

and incoming off-campus calls, Dolan said.

In past years, students' house bills paid for only part of that service, with the rest being covered from the general Institute operating budget.

Phones, Page 9

Potatoes, Cookies Disavow Harvard

By Kelley Rivoire
NEWS EDITOR

Hundreds packed into 10-250 last night to watch six faculty members debate in an attempt to answer

the question of which Jewish culinary treat, the latke, a fried potato pancake, or the hamentashen, a triangular-shaped cookie, is better.

On the side of the latke were President Susan Hockfield, Professor of Physics Walter H.G. Lewin, and Professor of Chemistry Stuart S. Licht PhD '98. Defending the hamentashen were Professor Marc Kastner, head of the department of physics, Jeremy Wolfe PhD '81, senior lecturer in brain and cognitive sciences, and Professor of Materials Science and Engineering Donald R. Sadoway.

The two sides argued for the beauty of form, scientific value, and health benefits of their respective foods. Both sides also tried to claim that Harvard President Lawrence H. Summers '75 supported the opposite side, and that the better choice therefore lay with their side instead.

As both foods received roughly equal numbers of supportive votes from audience members, the debate, which this was the third so far, will again continue next year.

Hockfield supports the latke

Those supporting the latke tried to exploit the benefit of having the

Debate, Page 10



JOEL SADLER—THE TECH

Professor of Physics Walter H.G. Lewin takes the The Great Latke-Hamentashen Debate to a new level of absurdity by demonstrating that latkes are capable of producing light. Despite this compelling evidence, the annual debate, held in Kresge Auditorium on Monday, March 14, was once again proclaimed a tie.

Doria Holbrook Wins At Diving Nationals

By Victoria K. Anderson

TEAM ALUMNA

In her first year of collegiate competition, Doria M. Holbrook '08 made her mark in the top ranks of NCAA Division III Swimming and Diving by winning the national championship in 3-meter diving and being named the 2005 Division III Diver of the Year.

Her score of 453.40 decisively topped the 435.80 that runner-up Kate Shaw of Amherst posted in the competition and put her in the history books as the first MIT diver to win a national championship. It also makes her the first MIT athlete to claim a victory in the NCAA Division III Women's Swimming and Diving Championships since Yvonne Grierson '90 won the 100 fly in 1990.

"It was a hard competition, and there were definitely a lot of girls who were viable for the title," said Holbrook about her victory in the 3-meter diving event. "It was a matter of who had a good meet, and everything came together at the right time for me."

"Doria is an exceptional athlete and an exceptional individual," said Diving Coach Brad Snodgrass, who was named the Division III Diving Coach of the Year.

"She had done very little work on the 3-meter board prior to MIT. This season, she learned an entire list of 3-meter dives, which is no small task, and did well enough to win at nationals. [It helps that] she is probably the most competitive individual I have ever met; she does not like to lose."

In addition to her victory in the 3-meter diving event, Holbrook claimed third place on the 1-meter board with a score of 374.20. Though Holbrook led all competitors in the preliminary round, Middlebury's Tessa Truex scored enough points in the final round to take the championship in that event.

"Next year I want to improve and win both 1- and 3-meter, and hopefully set a new national record on the 3-meter," said Holbrook.

Despite being MIT's only athlete to qualify for the national championships, Holbrook scored enough points to put the Beavers in 25th place in the 54 team field with 36 points. Emory won the meet with 399.5 points to hand Kenyon its second defeat at the national championships in 22 years.

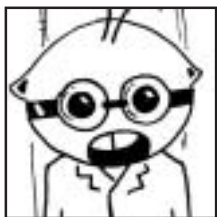
NEWS

Night Owl bus service ends

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Graduate students urge Sloan to reconsider its blanket rejection of applicants who sought their admissions statuses early via an insecure Web site.

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WORLD & NATION

Two Relatives of Saddam And Ex-Aide Are Arrested

By Robert F. Worth
THE NEW YORK TIMES

BAGHDAD, IRAQ

U.S. and Iraqi forces have captured a former member of Saddam Hussein's government and two of the dictator's relatives, officials said on Monday.

The relatives, Abdullah Maher Abdul Rashid and his cousin Marwan Taher Abdul Rashid, were seized on March 8 in Tikrit, Saddam's hometown, the Iraqi government said in a statement issued on Monday. Residents of Tikrit provided the information that led to the arrests, the statement said.

Marwan Taher Abdul Rashid worked as a bodyguard for Saddam. Abdullah Maher Abdul Rashid is a brother-in-law of Saddam's son Qusai, who was killed in a battle with U.S. soldiers in July 2003 and from whom he is thought to have received large amounts of money to finance insurgent attacks, Iraqi officials said.

The third man arrested, Omar Hassan Chiad, was an official in Saddam's government and was caught by U.S. soldiers, Iraqi police officials said. The U.S. military would give no details about the man or about his arrest.

Chinese Leader Defends Law Allowing Taiwan Attack

By Jim Yardley
THE NEW YORK TIMES

BEIJING

Prime Minister Wen Jiabao Monday defended a newly approved law that could authorize a military attack to prevent Taiwan from seeking independence, saying it was intended to ensure peace, not promote war.

"It is not a war bill," Wen said at a televised news conference after the closing of this year's session of the National People's Congress, China's version of a parliament.

Wen also criticized as outside interference a recent joint security declaration by the United States and Japan that listed a peaceful Taiwan Strait as a common objective. China considers Taiwan a break-away province and insists its policy regarding the island is a domestic matter.

"We don't want to see foreign interference," Wen said slowly, speaking about Taiwan, "but we do not fear foreign interference." The assembled hall of 700 journalists, a large majority Chinese, applauded.

His comments came about an hour after the National People's Congress overwhelming approved the law. It grants legal authority to the top leaders to attack Taiwan if they believe the disputed island territory is moving too far toward independence.

IBM to Buy Ascential

By Robert Weisman
THE BOSTON GLOBE

IBM Corp., reaching again into the Massachusetts high-tech cluster, said Monday it has signed a definitive agreement to buy Ascential Software Corp. of Westborough for \$1.1 billion in cash.

By purchasing Ascential, which sells data integration software to corporations, IBM is hoping to strengthen its business helping companies manage their data at a time when a spike in mergers and the sprouting of radio frequency identification (RFID) technology in retail operations have created new and larger streams of data. Ascential Software grew rapidly in 2004, with a reported 46 percent total revenue increase to \$271.9 million.

Over the next two months, as the parties present their deal to regulators and Ascential stockowners for approval, they will discuss whether to retain the Ascential brand and how to integrate its software into IBM's enterprise products, said Janet Perna, general manager of IBM's information management division in Westchester County, N.Y.

CA Same-Sex Marriage Ban Judged as Unconstitutional

By Dean E. Murphy
THE NEW YORK TIMES

SAN FRANCISCO

In a victory for city officials here, a judge in San Francisco County Superior Court ruled Monday that California's ban on same-sex marriage is unconstitutional, overturning a statewide proposition passed in 2000 that defined marriage as a relationship between a man and woman.

In a tentative ruling, Judge Richard A. Kramer said "the denial of marriage to same-sex couples appears impermissibly arbitrary," thereby violating the equal protection clause of the state constitution. The ruling will not be made final until the judge meets with the various parties to the litigation on March 30.

While welcoming the decision, which came in a lawsuit filed by the city against the state, Mayor Gavin Newsom of San Francisco said "it is only the beginning" of a long legal battle that will probably be decided by the California Supreme Court. Newsom said that marriage licenses would not be offered to same-sex couples in San Francisco while the litigation continued.

"We will continue to respect the decisions of the court," Newsom said.

Nonetheless, celebrations erupted at City Hall, as same-sex couples crowded into a news conference held by Newsom and other city officials, and gay and lesbian leaders announced there would be revelry throughout the evening in the Castro, the city's best-known gay district. Marches and rallies were announced in a least a dozen other cities across the state.

"Today we truly believe that California is a better place than it was yesterday," said John Lewis, who exchanged kisses with his partner of 18 years, Stuart Gaffney, in front of phalanx of cameras at City Hall.

A spokesman for Bill Lockyer, the California attorney general, said the judge's ruling was being reviewed and had no further comment. Other defenders of the state marriage laws said it would be appealed as soon as it was made final.

"This was not a good decision for us, I acknowledge that," said Glen Lavy, senior counsel with the Alliance Defense Fund, a Christian group based in Arizona, adding however, that it was only "the first stop in the judicial battle in California."

Mathew D. Staver, president and general counsel of Liberty Counsel, which represents Campaign for Cali-

fornia Families, a group in Sacramento that has opposed San Francisco's bid to legalize same-sex marriages, denounced the ruling as "ludicrous."

"Marriage should not be undermined by the stroke of a pen from a single judge," Staver said in a statement. "This ruling, which flies in the face of common sense and millennia of human history, will pour gasoline on the fire ignited by the pro-marriage movement."

Newsom opened the doors of City Hall to same-sex marriages in February 2004 only to have them closed and the licenses invalidated by the California Supreme Court. The high court determined Newsom had exceeded his authority as mayor, but it did not consider the constitutionality of state laws restricting marriage to a man and a woman.

In the ruling on Monday, Kramer was responding to a lawsuit filed by the city and more than a dozen same-sex couples, including Lewis and Gaffney, to challenge the state's gender restriction on marriage directly. The restriction is based on a law enacted by the Legislature in 1977 and the statewide initiative approved by the voters in 2000, known as Proposition 22.

Greenberg Resigns As Longtime AIG Insurance Chief Executive

By Gretchen Morgenson
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Maurice R. Greenberg, the executive who built American International Group into a global insurance powerhouse and shaped an entire industry during nearly 40 years at the company's helm, stepped down as chief executive Monday after a series of run-ins with regulators raised questions about its complex and often obscure operations.

His exit came after lengthy discussions by the company's directors in recent days and appeared intended to avert a head-on collision with two regulators: the Securities and Exchange Commission and Eliot Spitzer, the New York attorney general.

Greenberg had been scheduled to appear for a deposition in Spitzer's office on Thursday to answer questions about a transaction that regulators say may have artificially bolstered the company's financial position, according to a person briefed on the matter. Worries about his testimony drove the board to action, this person said. Greenberg will be questioned at a later date.

Monday's departure underscores a new inclination among directors, even those serving alongside an executive as entrenched as Greenberg, to move quickly to correct problems, both real and perceived. In recent months, boards of companies like Boeing, Hewlett-Packard and Fannie Mae have

removed their top executives.

Replacing Greenberg immediately as chief executive at AIG is Martin Sullivan, who has been co-chief operating officer at the company. Greenberg lobbied successfully to stay on as chairman of AIG for a short but unspecified period of time, according to two people briefed on the board's discussions.

The departure of Greenberg, who will turn 80 in May, is a stunning final chapter to one of corporate America's most spectacular rags-to-riches stories. Greenberg, who grew up in hardscrabble circumstances on a dairy farm in upstate New York, reached the apex of corporate power and wealth by dint of hard work and a quick mind.

WEATHER

Winter Round-Up

By David Flagg
STAFF METEOROLOGIST

Although the period between the winter solstice and the vernal equinox defines the astronomical winter in the northern hemisphere, meteorologists often refer to the quarterly period of December through February (DJF) as the winter season. In spite of the cooler than normal DJF conditions in Boston (0.9°F (0.5°C) lower than usual), most of the U.S. enjoyed a relatively mild winter. Only the immediate U.S. East Coast, parts of New York state, New England, and a few small, isolated areas in the north and west sustained average temperatures below the climatological averages (1971-2000). Some areas in the upper Midwest, High Plains and Rockies enjoyed temperature anomalies of more than 7°F (3.9°C) higher than usual.

For precipitation, Boston finished very close to average (0.14" (0.36 cm) lower than usual). However, the DJF snowfall difference from normal was 36.7" (93.2 cm) higher than usual. The total snowfall observed since the first accumulating event last November currently stands at 86.1" (218.7 cm), which is 222 percent of normal and is now among the top five snowiest years of all time. The rest of the U.S. was evenly divided between moist and dry regimes during the DJF period. The northern Rockies and Pacific Northwest, as well as the Southeast, were very dry (in some cases less than 25 percent of normal), while the Southwest sustained significant rainfall exceeding 400 percent of normal in parts of California.

What does the meteorological spring season (March-May) hold in store? According to the Climate Prediction Center, a division of the National Weather Service, it will be warmer than normal in the northwestern half of the country and cooler than normal elsewhere with wetter conditions along the West Coast but generally variable elsewhere.

Extended Forecast:

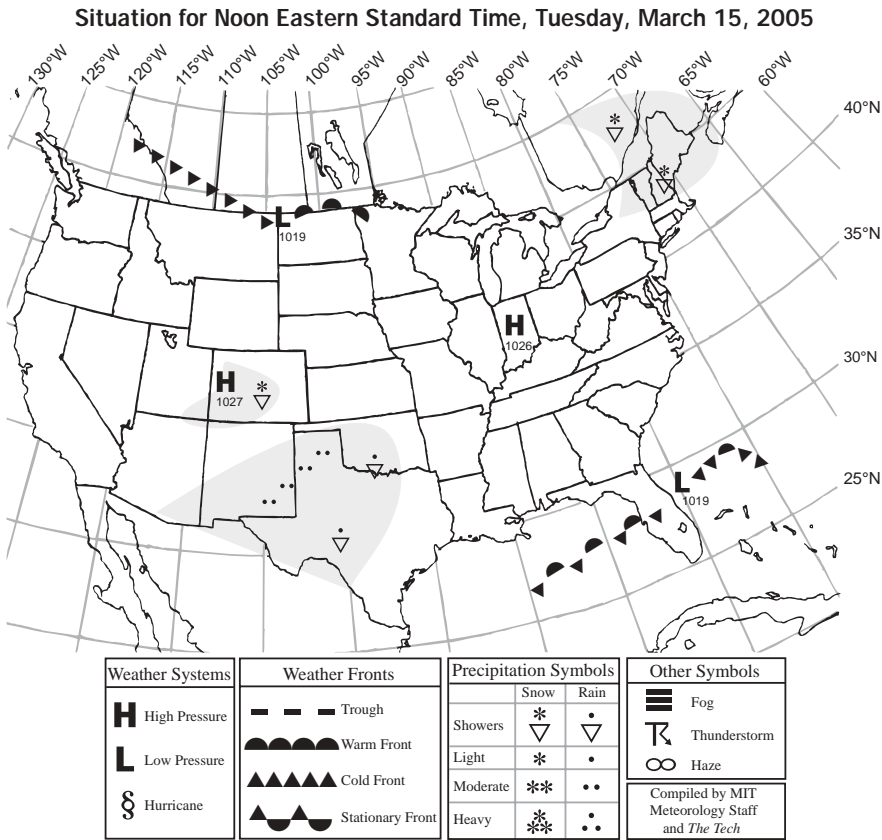
Today: Mostly cloudy with a chance of a snow flurry. High 42°F (6°C).

Tonight: Decreasing clouds with occasionally gusty winds. Low 25°F (-4°C).

Tomorrow: Partly cloudy, gusty winds continue. High 43°F (6°C).

Tomorrow night: Partly cloudy, winds abate. Low 27°F (-3°C).

Thursday: Partly cloudy. High 38°F (3°C).



Huge Lebanese Demonstration Demands Syrian Troops Leave

By Neil Macfarquhar
THE NEW YORK TIMES BEIRUT, LEBANON

Lebanon’s anti-Syria opposition regained momentum on Monday as hundreds of thousands of Lebanese jammed Beirut’s central square to demand the end to Syrian control of their country.

Seemingly every available space around the heart of the city overflowed with people waving the red-and-white Lebanese flag, in a showing that easily rivaled a pro-Syria rally last Tuesday organized by the radical Shiite party Hezbollah.

“We don’t want Syrian spies and secret police; we don’t want any foreign intervention,” said Noha Dahir, a veiled 18-year-old Sunni Muslim student who came by bus from the northern city of Tripoli. “Those Lebanese who want the Syrians to stay can go live in Syria. There are plenty of Lebanese here to fill the country.”

The most notable element in the demonstration in Martyrs’ Square

was that it represented an exceedingly rare moment in which a broad cross section of Lebanese from every main sect — Christian, Druse, Shiite and Sunni Muslims — were all rubbing shoulders in the same space.

“They can say that they represent a wide spectrum of Lebanese factions, including some Shiites, and they have been able to bring the Sunnis into the streets, which is not easy,” Ghassan Salame, a former minister of culture and political science professor, said by telephone from Paris. “They have an upward momentum now after a week that was full of uncertainty.”

In the main mosque, still under construction, demonstrators even crammed the tiny balconies hundreds of feet up on the four minarets, vestiges of a time when the call to prayer was done orally. A few daredevils inched their way out along a huge construction crane looming over the building to drape a Lebanese flag at the end.

The opposition experienced

some doubts about the extent of its appeal after the Hezbollah demonstration in a nearby square in downtown Beirut on Tuesday. There have been rallies in the city center every Monday since former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri was assassinated Feb. 14, a Monday, but organizers were determined to make this one especially large in response to the pro-Syrian march.

“This will counterbalance last Tuesday, and now we can sit and talk,” said Mazen al-Zain, a 30-year-old financial analyst, noting that he himself was a member of an illustrious Shiite clan from southern Lebanon. “What is really important after today’s gathering is that we all sit down at the same table.”

The presence of such a large number of Lebanese put added pressure on the government of Syria to announce a serious timetable for the withdrawal of both its thousands of troops and its secret police officers in the country.

Halliburton Overbilled Iraq Fuel Imports by \$108M, Report Claims

By Erik Eckholm
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Excess billing for postwar fuel imports to Iraq by the Halliburton Co. totaled more than \$108 million, according to a report by Pentagon auditors that was completed last fall but has never been officially released to the public or to Congress.

In one case, according to the report, the company claimed that it had paid more than \$27 million to transport liquefied petroleum gas that it had purchased in Kuwait for just \$82,000 — a fee the auditors tartly dismissed as “illogical.”

The fuels report, by the Defense Contract Audit Agency, was one of nine audits involving a subsidiary of Halliburton, Kellogg, Brown & Root. The audits were completed in October 2004, in the month before the American presidential elections. But the administration has kept all of them confidential despite repeated requests from both Republican and Democratic members of Congress.

Excerpts from the report were released on Monday by the office of Henry A. Waxman, minority leader of the House Committee on Government Reform, which said it had obtained the audit through “unoffi-

cial channels.”

Vice President Dick Cheney formerly headed Halliburton, a Texas-based conglomerate. Allegations of profiteering by the company — hotly disputed by Halliburton and senior administration officials — were raised in the presidential campaign.

“The facts show that KBR delivered fuel crucial to the Iraqi people when failure was not an option,” said Wendy Hall, a spokeswoman for Halliburton, in an e-mail on Monday. “We will continue to work with the Army to prove, once and for all, that KBR delivered these vital services for the Iraqi people at a fair and reasonable cost given the circumstances.”

KBR has received more than \$10 billion in contracts for work in Iraq, including oil-field repairs, the disputed fuel imports, and, in a huge separate agreement, provision of housing, meals, and other support to the military.

In a letter sent to President Bush on Monday, Waxman and John D. Dingell, minority leader of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, asked for an explanation of why the auditing reports had not been released to Congress and demanded stronger efforts to

reclaim funds from Halliburton.

Allegations of overcharging for the fuel imports have swirled from the initial days of the occupation, but in this latest audit the scale of officially disputed charges is higher than previously reported. In December 2003, the same Pentagon auditing agency announced that a preliminary study had discovered \$61 million in unreasonable fuel bills up to that point.

The later audit describes “unreasonable” and “questionable” billing of \$108 million out of total billings of \$875 million under an initial “task order” to Kellogg, Brown & Root to import fuels into Iraq.

Similar studies covered eight other task orders granted to the company, all of them elements of a broad \$2.5-billion contract, now completed, to import fuels and make initial repairs to Iraqi oil fields. The total level of questionable billing in those reports remains confidential but could be much higher than the \$108 million, the congressmen note in their letter.

The largest allegations of overcharging involve Halliburton’s hiring in early 2003, without competitive bidding, of a Kuwaiti company called Altamnia to buy and deliver fuels from Kuwait.

Israelis Cede Security Control Over Two West Bank Towns to Palestinians

By Greg Myre
THE NEW YORK TIMES JERUSALEM

Israel agreed Monday to hand over security control of two West Bank towns to the Palestinians, a transfer the Palestinians have sought in fitful negotiations since a truce declared by the two sides five weeks ago.

Israel’s defense minister, Shaul Mofaz, and the Palestinian interior minister, Nasser Yousef, reached a deal late Monday night to put the Palestinians in control of Jericho on Wednesday or Thursday, followed by Tulkarm early next week, according to an Israeli official in the Defense Ministry.

The move is a limited step that could easily be reversed. Still, it reflects the reduced level of violence and Israel’s willingness to begin lowering its security presence in the West Bank.

The Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas, opposes attacks against Israel and insists the Palestinian security

forces will work to prevent violence, but he says that Israelis must allow the Palestinian security forces to operate freely in the Palestinian areas.

Palestinians have complained that they have seen only a limited easing of Israeli security restrictions despite the truce announced on Feb. 8.

If the handover goes well, it could lead to a further lifting of restrictions, but if Palestinian militants launch attacks from areas under the control of the Palestinian security forces, then the Israelis are likely to return.

Tulkarm has been a hotbed of Palestinian militancy throughout the past four and a half years of fighting. A Palestinian suicide bomber from a village outside Tulkarm killed five Israelis at a Tel Aviv nightclub on Feb. 25, the worst single attack since the truce was announced.

Jericho, deep in the West Bank near the border with Jordan, has been calm aside from a brief series of clashes at the beginning of the Palestinian uprising in the fall of 2000.

The two sides plan additional

talks on handing over security control in Qalqiliya, which is near Tulkarm and which as also been a launching pad for many suicide bombings.

Israel occupied Palestinian towns in the West Bank and Gaza after the 1967 war, but began pulling out after an interim peace agreement in 1993. It charged back in to Palestinian towns in the West Bank three years ago this month when suicide bombings reached a peak, and troops have been in or near the towns ever since.

In other developments Monday, the U.N. secretary-general, Kofi Annan SM ’72, told Abbas he believed the creation of a Palestinian state was realistic goal in the not-too-distant future.

“I think that the positive developments here give us a chance to re-energize the process and work to ensure that the day when a Palestinian state will be established, living side by side with Israel, will not be too long,” said Annan, who visited Abbas in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

Cocaine Incident Leads To Dismissal of Argentine Officials

By Larry Rohter
THE NEW YORK TIMES BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

The suspiciously negligent handling of an inquiry into a major drug smuggling incident has led to a partial purge of Argentina’s military and security forces and the emergence of concerns that this country has become a new target for South American narcotics traffickers.

The episode began in September, when four suitcases containing more than 130 pounds of cocaine were sent unaccompanied aboard a Southern Winds Airline flight from the main airport here to Madrid, Spain. The Spanish authorities seized the drugs on arrival and alerted Argentine and airline officials, but after that very little appears to have been done at this end.

Government officials say that President Nestor Kirchner learned of the case last month, as it was about to appear in local news reports, and became furious at the lack of official action. Once the details of the smuggling incident became public knowledge, criticisms of the investigative judge looking into the incident and of Kirchner’s transportation secretary made the case even more politically explosive.

The president’s first step was to dismiss the head of the Air Force, Gen. Carlos Rohde, and about a dozen other generals, some of them decorated veterans of the Falkland Islands war in 1982. On Wednesday, Rohde was also placed under house arrest after he failed to respond to a judicial summons to testify in the drug smuggling case, officials say.

In Japan, Better-Than-Expected Economic News

By Todd Zauin
THE NEW YORK TIMES TOKYO

The mild recession that Japan fell into last year has not only ended, but it did not last as long as previously reported, new figures released on Monday showed.

The government revised its data for the fourth quarter of 2004 to an annualized growth rate of 0.5 percent, from a preliminary estimate of a 0.5 percent decline.

The new figures showed that the moderate recession that began last April lasted only two quarters, not three quarters as the government said previously. The revision brings the official measure of Japan’s gross domestic product more closely in line with the assessments of economists who have argued that the government painted too gloomy a picture of the economy.

“We saw some kind of trough around the end of last year, and things are now picking up,” said Peter Morgan, an economist for HSBC Securities (Japan) Ltd., in Tokyo. “Essentially, we had this slow patch in exports, primarily in the electronics sector, which does seem to be easing now.”

More recent data indicate growth is continuing, Morgan said. Consumer spending and factory output are rising, employment conditions are improving, and the long slide in wages and consumer prices appears to be coming to an end.

Research on Tiny Bubbles Provides Hints of Fusion

By Kenneth Chang
THE NEW YORK TIMES

When the force of sound waves implodes tiny bubbles in a liquid at room temperature, the surface of the bubble can reach temperatures at least 25,000 degrees Fahrenheit, more than twice as hot as the surface of the sun, scientists reported this month.

The center of such a bubble may be even more astonishingly hot. The scientists, at the University of Illinois, did not speculate how hot the bubble became, but said they had created in the bubble a state of matter called plasma. In it, some of the electrons have been stripped off the atoms.

“This is the first definitive proof of the existence of a plasma” during this kind of bubble implosion said Dr. Kenneth S. Suslick, a professor of chemistry at Illinois and one of the scientists.

Their finding supports the notion that it may be possible to compress these bubbles so violently that vapor molecules in them are heated to temperatures that rival those at the center of the sun, 27 million degrees Fahrenheit.

The phenomenon of imploding bubbles, called sonoluminescence because it emits a flash of light as the bubble collapses, has been increasingly studied since it was discovered 15 years ago.

In 2002, scientists performing an experiment at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee even reported that they had used the technique to fuse hydrogen atoms into helium — the process that powers the sun. That experiment did not measure the bubble temperatures, but detected byproducts of fusion.

Judge Delays Trial of Student On Assassination-Plot Counts

By Eric Lichtblau
THE NEW YORK TIMES ALEXANDRIA, VA.

Federal prosecutors won a delay on Monday in the trial of a U.S. student accused of plotting to assassinate President Bush, contending that the use of Saudi witnesses and the defense’s allegations of torture would make the case unusually complicated and time-consuming.

But a lawyer for the student, Ahmed Omar Abu Ali, 23, described the Justice Department’s delay request as a sign that the evidence against Abu Ali was weak. Prosecutors “want time to concoct a case,” the lawyer, Ashraf W. Nubani, said.

Abu Ali would normally have to be put on trial by early May on charges that he provided material support to al-Qaida while studying in Saudi Arabia, in part through the alleged plot in 2003 to kill Bush.

But Judge Gerald Bruce Lee of U.S. District Court agreed Monday to put off the trial until Aug. 22 at the urging of prosecutors.

Abu Ali, a former valedictorian at an Islamic high school in Northern Virginia, has been ordered to remain in federal custody without bail until his trial.

OPINION

DormCon Letter Needs Different Slant

On March 4, MIT’s five most recent DormCon ex-presidents sent a letter (available at <http://web/dormcon/docs/alum-letter-march2005.pdf>) to President Hockfield both welcoming her to the

Editorial

Institute and offering caution and advice with respect to the continual dormitory and living group changes now being implemented at MIT. Making reference to the 1998 Presidential Task Force on Student Life and Learning report (available at <http://web.mit.edu/committees/sll/tf.html>), the former students offered both agreement with many of the report’s positive findings on the nature of MIT community life (loyalty to residence, independence of community groups, diversity of groups) as well as disappointment with the Institute’s most recent and controversial changes in dormitory and FSILG life (freshmen in dormitories, truncated Orientation experience, challenges to community autonomy).

After sizing up the ongoing changes to the dormitory and FSILG system and presenting their interpretation of the 1998 Task Force’s findings, the former presidents make several suggestions to Dr. Hockfield on how to bring MIT’s plans for residence change more into line with the Task Force’s positive findings about MIT’s community groups. Among these suggestions were to preserve the shared living space between freshmen and upperclassmen (avoid a freshmen-only dormitory), to maintain the rights of students to take on high responsibility for their living space (avoid stripping even more autonomy from residences), to preserve the idea that MIT community flows in part from residence community, and to infuse REX with more qualities of the original “rush” period. According to the authors, these suggestions were both likely to foster good community as defined by the Task Force and representative of the common sense and preferences of the MIT undergraduate student community. The preamble to the letter also contained a plea to not bring MIT’s residence system into line with other institutions simply for the sake of conformity to the mainstream, on the basis that MIT’s unique ways of doing things are consistently superior and that our strong community ties speak for themselves.

While the majority of campus undergraduates certainly share the hopes of the letter’s authors, most notably a return to the former system of pre-2002 residence “rush,” *The Tech* feels that this entreaty by former DormCon presidents, however earnest, runs into the usual

problem of issuing requests in a manner that MIT’s administration is simply unable to process. While the letter does make references to the Task Force Report, and it does make the case that solid benefits would arise to the administration by granting undergraduates’ wishes, it phrases both complaints and benefits from the perspective of students rather than administrators. Rather than focusing on potential benefits that would accrue to the adults with authority, the letter focuses with only a few exceptions on intangible benefits that are easily brushed aside by an administrator who has never been a student in MIT’s residence system. Its complaints seem similarly biased towards student desires, and an unsympathetic administrator might easily dismiss the letter as the agenda of five DormCon ex-presidents.

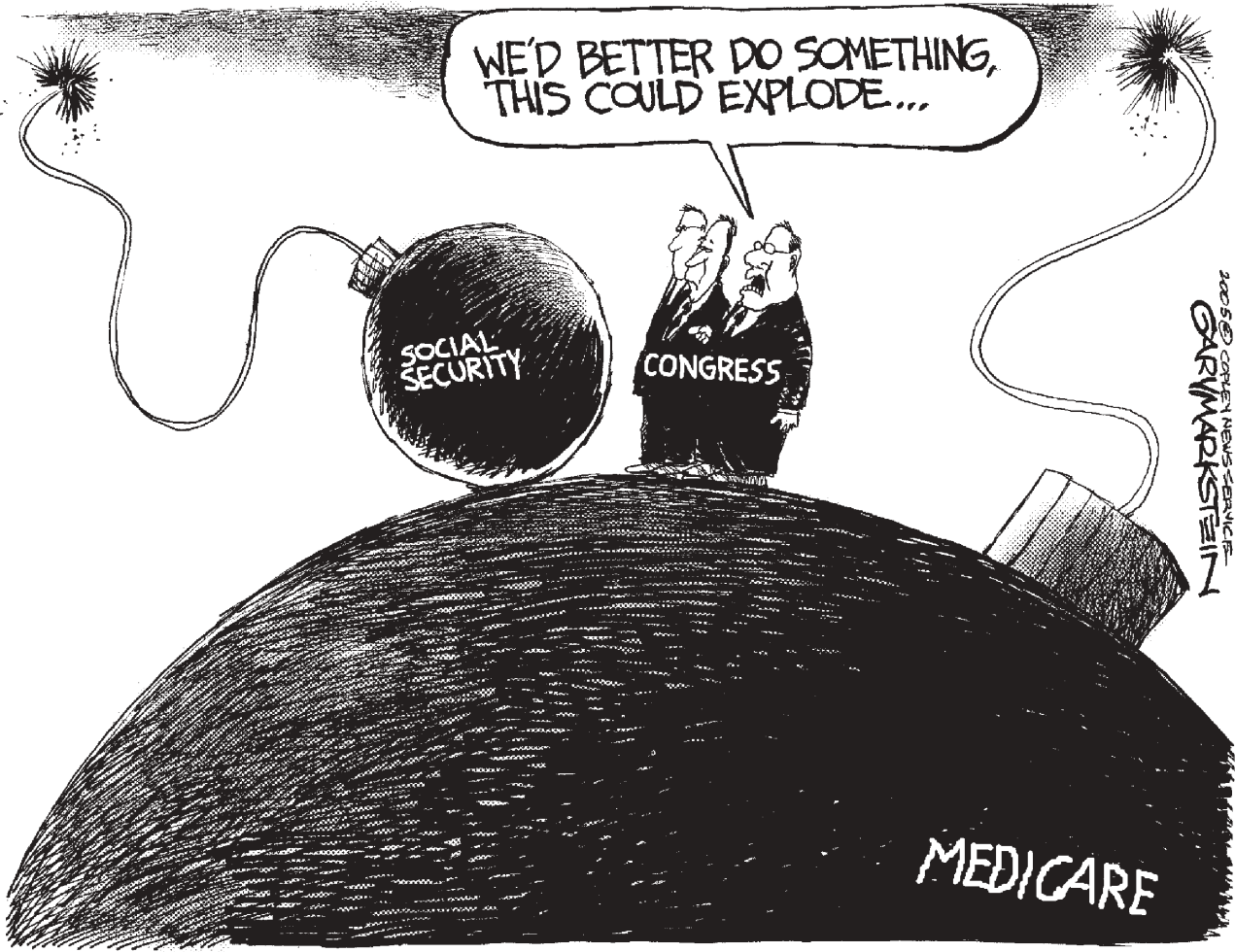
This situation would be unfortunate, because it would overlook some of the tangible benefits of our residence system, many of which involve using community to prevent problems that occur at other more “mainstream” institutions.

For example, the relatively lower rate of substance abuse at MIT is not just because of our backgrounds, but because of how we live. Strong, age-varied communities tamp down on the sort of atrocious underclassman behavior exhibited at schools with weaker community and most notably, all freshmen dormitories, which tend to be famous for drinking and general debauchery. To put it simply, the MIT administration reaps many hidden benefits from our unique living arrangements that are probably never considered. Every freshman that enters an existing MIT-style community is money saved to MIT in terms of substance abuse apparatus at MIT Medical.

A similar argument might be made for conditions such as depression which are mitigated by communities where even the most unique personalities can find a niche in our various dormitories and living groups. It is reasonable to assume that MIT’s tight-knit communities lessen the dangers of depression and improves the mental health of the students. This translates into money saved on things like suicide lawsuits, which generate huge negative press for MIT. If the administration wishes both to avoid repeats of the freshman alcohol party at Burton Conner earlier this school year, as well as to promote the general mental health of its students, it should consider maintaining parts of its residence system that have helped the community so faithfully over time.

Erratum

A front-page caption in Friday’s issue incorrectly stated that the MIT Shakespeare Ensemble’s production of Othello will run through March 12. It will actually run through March 19.



Opinion Policy

Editorials are the official opinion of *The Tech*. They are written by the editorial board, which consists of the chairman, editor in chief, managing editor, opinion editors, a senior editor, and an opinion staffer.

Dissents are the opinions of signed members of the editorial board choosing to publish their disagreement with the editorial.

Letters to the editor, columns, and editorial cartoons are written by individuals and represent the opinion of the author, not necessarily that of the newspaper. Electronic submissions are encouraged and should be sent to letters@the-tech.mit.edu. Hard copy submissions should be addressed to *The Tech*, P.O. Box 397029, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029, or sent by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483. All submissions are due by 4:30 p.m. two days before the date of publication.

Letters, columns, and cartoons must bear the authors’ signatures, addresses, and phone numbers. Unsigned letters will not be accepted.

The Tech reserves the right to edit or condense letters; shorter letters will be given higher priority. Once submitted, all letters become property of *The Tech*, and will not be returned. *The Tech* makes no commitment to publish all the letters received.

Guest columns are opinion articles submitted by members of the MIT or local community and have the author’s name in italics. Columns without italics are written by *Tech* staff.

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The Tech (ISSN 0148-9607) is published on Tuesdays and Fridays during the academic year (except during MIT vacations), Wednesdays during January and monthly during the summer for \$45.00 per year Third Class by *The Tech*, Room W20-483, 84 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Mass. 02139. Third Class postage paid at Boston, Mass. Permit No. 1. **POSTMASTER:** Please send all address changes to our mailing address: *The Tech*, P.O. Box 397029, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029. Telephone: (617) 253-1541, editorial; (617) 258-8329, business; (617) 258-8226, facsimile. *Advertising, subscription, and typesetting rates available.* Entire contents © 2005 **The Tech**. Printed on recycled paper by Charles River Publishing.

Regarding REX

Ian Brelinsky, Harvey Jones

A constant refrain one hears on campus is that dorm rush is dying. Frosh are disconnected, upperclassmen apathetic, and student governments weak against the vast administrative conspiracy to exile dorm rush, randomize housing, and kill all semblances of unique culture that contribute to our treasured MIT pedigree. Yet, three years after the last “real” dorm rush, things are not as dire as some would have you believe. Frosh still pick their living group, upperclassmen still actively participate in their community, and our unique cultures live on. Dorm rush is not dying; it's still alive and well due to the efforts of the thousands of residents of the dorm system. The leaders of DormCon feel that this year's schedule is actually an improvement over the schedule of last year and a major step in the right direction, although much more work is still needed to make future calendars even better. We would like to take this space to address the concerns that many people have recently voiced.

Dorm rush is happening at the beginning of Orientation this year. We think this is a logical place to put it; the frosh will figure out where they want to live, get settled in, and then turn their focus to academics and localized friendships. Rather than having to squeeze rush into a three-day jumble of class selection, extracurriculars, presentations, discussions and Playfairs; dorm selection and community building will have the spotlight for the first two full days that they spend at MIT. Since more and more frosh are moving in early for FPOPs and sports, we're expanding REX into FPOP time as well. People have

expressed two main concerns with these developments. The first is that the frosh will show up late, missing dorm rush altogether; the second is that frosh who show up at the normal time will miss out on an important part of rush. We are working to make certain that the frosh all show up on time; we will coordinate messages and mailings with the administrators responsible for orientation to ensure that this goal is met. You can help as well; tell your friends who have enrolled to show up on time. Our answer to the second concern is that we will treat the FPOP time as we do the i3 mailing and CPW time — an important resource for those who take advantage of it,

but secondary to actually being in the dorms while rush is underway.

The support networks built by freshmen that actively engage in their communities are priceless. Such networks help individuals succeed academically and socially and arguably save a few lives — we cannot afford to

lose them. Those charged with planning orientation agree with us that freshmen need to be engaged in a supportive community in order to succeed — that social skills and values must be instilled. Everyone agreed that freshmen must have time to explore MIT and the various living groups. We took these goals and constructed a calendar which accomplishes them to varying degrees. This year, all of Sunday, all of Monday and part of Tuesday are devoted to Student Life Activities, the time during which getting acquainted with dorm cultures will feature prominently. Dorms will actually have more unrestricted time to hold events of their choosing than they had last year.

Still, we don't have the perfect schedule yet. We are working toward expanding Stu-

dent Life Activities to a full three-day period with REX laced between residence-based programming. Dorm life frames many of the experiences that freshmen have during their first year at MIT: from finding people to tool with to unearthing who they really are. We feel that an introduction to life at MIT should feature prominently where people live and how they thrive there. One of the best parts of the MIT residential experience is that freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors, graduate students and professors all live and work together — we want to ensure that freshmen have the opportunity to meet and make friends, building their support network. We need to strengthen our communities, we need to cultivate leaders and we need to give freshmen the tools to succeed in every way possible at MIT. We feel that working with the administration to integrate MIT's living and working culture into Orientation will help freshmen, upperclassmen, and ultimately our entire community.

Apathy destroys community, reduces efficiency, and costs lives. Money won't cure it, neither will advertising campaigns nor press. MIT students sustain the residential cultures and communities that make MIT unique. Having seen hundreds of upperclassmen show up and pitch in for last year's rush, and having seen a thousand frosh excited about living at MIT and in our dorms, we feel that there is enough excitement and energy to sustain this process for years to come. Current MIT students do a great job communicating the importance of dorm selection to the incoming frosh — more of them entered the housing lottery this year either to confirm or change their assignment than ever before. Apathy hasn't won, and it won't, as long as we value the communities in which we reside and continue to do our parts to make MIT the place we always dreamt it would be.

This message was approved unanimously by the DormCon Executive Board.

Ian Brelinsky is the President of the Dormitory Council, and Harvey Jones is a former Residence Exploration Chair of the Dormitory Council.

Leaving Well-Enough Alone

Richard Kraus

Social security, as it is currently constituted, is a perfect example of why governments should not get into the business of transferring wealth from one segment of society to another. Although liberals might believe that the power of the government can be used to redistribute wealth from the rich to the poor, it inevitably happens that, once the government gets into the wealth-transfer game, it transfers wealth not from the rich to the poor, but from the weak to the powerful. The only way to stop this is to get the government out of this game by privatizing social security.

This is hardly surprising, since whenever the government would spend money on anything, it must first levy taxes on the population or some segment thereof. Invariably, however, taxes will always fall heaviest on the politically weakest. This is simply because factions that are sufficiently well-organized to lobby effectively for their interests can induce the government to give them tax breaks of one form or another. Those who are not well-organized politically, or who are politically weak for other reasons, cannot win tax breaks from Congress, and so the burden of taxation falls most heavily on them.

The reverse, of course, is true once the government starts disbursing tax revenues in the form of subsidies: the strong are able to lobby their legislators for subsidies, while the weak cannot. Consequently, no matter how well-intentioned any government redistribution-of-wealth scheme might initially be, it ineluctably becomes a game of taking from the weak to give to the strong.

With reference to social security, it cannot be escaped that there are few if any interest groups in this country more powerful than the elderly. First, the elderly are, on average, the wealthiest age group in this country. Second, they have the highest level of political participation, as measured both by voter turnout rates and rates of volunteering in political campaigns. Third, they have, in the American Association of Retired Persons, or the AARP, what Fortune magazine has consistently rated as the most powerful lobbying organization in Washington.

The young, by contrast, are among the weakest political factions. They have the lowest voter turnout rates. Because they are typically still in school or are only at the very beginning of their careers, they tend to be the poorest. Lastly, they have no lobbying organization at all that represents their interests. Given all this, it can scarcely be surprising that the government gouges the paychecks of the young to subsidize the elderly.

Black people are another group disadvantaged by social security, which is not surprising since generally speaking, black people are politically weaker than Whites. Blacks tend to be poorer than whites and have lower voter turnout rates. Also, an overwhelming majority of black voters consistently vote for the Democrats, which inevitably leads to black voters being taken for granted by both parties. There are, obviously, other reasons that blacks tend to wield less political clout than do whites, but even if there were not, the aforementioned causes would be sufficient in themselves.

Since blacks wield, on average, less political power in America than whites, it is hardly surprising that social security discriminates against black people. Consider that, in 2001, the average life expectancy for white people was about 77.7 years, whereas the average life expectancy for Blacks was 72.2 years; for black men, it was even lower at 68.6 years. Since the retirement age is 67, this means that not only do black people collect considerably less in social security benefits, on average, than do whites, but that black men collect, on average, almost nothing. Of course, blacks pay the exact same payroll tax rates to provide social security benefits as do whites.

Social security is unjust. It penalizes the weak to give benefits to the strong. If the weak had something wrong, and the strong had behaved extraordinarily righteously, perhaps this would be a morally appropriate, or at least justifiable, state of affairs, but there is no evidence whatever that this is the case.

Despite being unjust, however, this state of affairs is inevitable whenever governments start taxing one group of people in order to subsidize another. The only way to avoid this problem is to have government get out of the business of transferring wealth altogether. That is why social security should be reformed, and indeed, privatized.

Richard Kraus is a graduate student.

Sloan Should Reconsider Rejections

This letter was sent to Sloan School of Management Dean Richard Schmalensee and Director of Admissions Rod Garcia by members of the Cryptography and Information Security Group and CSAIL at MIT.

Dear Dean Schmalensee, Director of Admissions Garcia,

We write to ask the MIT Sloan School to reconsider its recent blanket rejection of applicants who sought to learn their acceptance status via an insecure Web site. To call such actions unethical encourages an erroneous and dangerous interpretation of computer security and the architecture of the Web. As an institution that prides itself on the technological prowess of its members, MIT should lead the charge in teaching security to the world (including other business schools), rather than laying blame on a few students who are guilty of nothing more than legitimate curiosity.

Let us consider the analogy made by Dean Schmalensee: that these students performed the equivalent of “picking a lock and breaking into an office.” The facts now emerging do not support this grim picture. The applicants in question simply copied and pasted their user ID into the browser address bar. Using only their given credentials, they were granted access, without warning or notice, to

the very Web page which they would have been directed to by the school a few days later. No breaking of locks was involved. No server malfunction was elicited. A number of experts agree that the root cause was a grossly insecure Web site, not a hack. The right analogy should read: “The results were mistakenly posted in a dark, but public, corridor. Someone found the results and alerted others. Applicants rushed to the location with a flashlight.” The school's mistake does not make its applicants unethical.

Consider a more practical analogy. An applicant calls the admissions office in the hope of obtaining his acceptance information early. Does the applicant's simple request, whether or not he is given an answer, make him unethical? Empirical evidence and reason both indicate a strong negative: curiosity is not a crime. The onus is on the school to enforce its own policies. This intuition is confirmed by the the legal analysis of Professor Orin Kerr: obtaining information posted without protection on a web site is perfectly acceptable. Whether the request is served by a person on the phone or by a web server should be irrelevant.

MIT should lead the charge in teaching security to the world ... rather than laying blame on a few students

At the core of this debate lies a crucial issue: how are individuals expected to behave online? Online security and ethics should be

no different than their offline counterparts. If a school operates an insecure service that indiscriminately hands out confidential information, the school is at fault. To assume otherwise in this case is to impose an unreasonable

atmosphere of rigidity to the Web that is antithetical to academics and entrepreneurship.

MIT should not only understand this, it should take a leadership role in teaching others. We hope MIT Sloan will reevaluate their extreme reaction and give these applicants a fair shot.

Sincerely,

Ben Adida, Susan Hohenberger, Matthew Lepinsky, David Liben-Nowell, Akshay Patil, Chris Peikert, Abhi Shelat, David Wilson
Members of the Cryptography and Information Security Group and CSAIL, MIT.

The HTML version of this letter, complete with references and links to those references, is available at <http://crypto.csail.mit.edu/~ben/mitsloan-crypto-letter>.

Letters To The Editor

Not Hacking!

Sloppy.

The Tech should be ashamed for essentially copying big media's uninformed and incorrect headlines (“Sloan Denies Admission to Those Who Attempted to Hack Admissions Site,” March 11). Changing the URL manually on a Web site is not hacking.

That's right. These students were rejected for manually entering a URL that showed them their admissions status. The resource pointed to by this URL was world-readable. It's fair game. Business students should be go getters. I don't see what they did wrong or out of character. It certainly shouldn't be illegal. I agree with the popular sentiment that these harsh rulings by the business schools are simply an attempt to look tough on ethics. This is a PR ploy by Sloan, and *The Tech* should stop being a lap-dog and

call it what it is.

Daniel Roy G

Ideals?

I suppose that Omar Molina meant to be facetious when he concluded his opinion column by saying “Sure, we right-wingers are closer to Hitler in ideals than you are, but you're closer to Stalin ... so we're even” (“The Perils of Conservatism,” March 8). But who knows? I am not accusing him, but I think it is important to keep in mind that Hitler's “ideals” (or rather, his disgusting assertions) included these: the need for an all-powerful totalitarian state; Lebensraum for “pure” “Aryans”; the “treachery” of Jews and Catholics; the subhuman nature of Jews and gypsies; the need for constant mobilization and complete militarization of society; the importance of indoctrinating children when they're young, so that they

do not learn their parents' values; the right to imprison and ultimately kill all dissenters.

It is one thing to argue that Conservatives are not given a fair shake around MIT when it comes to being able to express opinions freely; it is quite another to associate yourself with Hitler, and those who disagree with you with Stalin. The fact is, when it comes to the totalitarian goals listed above, Stalin embraced many of them quite as readily as Hitler; they were both amoral dictators for whom political doctrine and ideology took a back seat to lust for power and the will to have their nations ride roughshod over anyone who stood in their way. Their “values” were and are untenable: neither true liberals nor true conservatives could possibly accept them, and it is chilling to see them made light of by a knowledgeable MIT undergraduate, even if in jest.

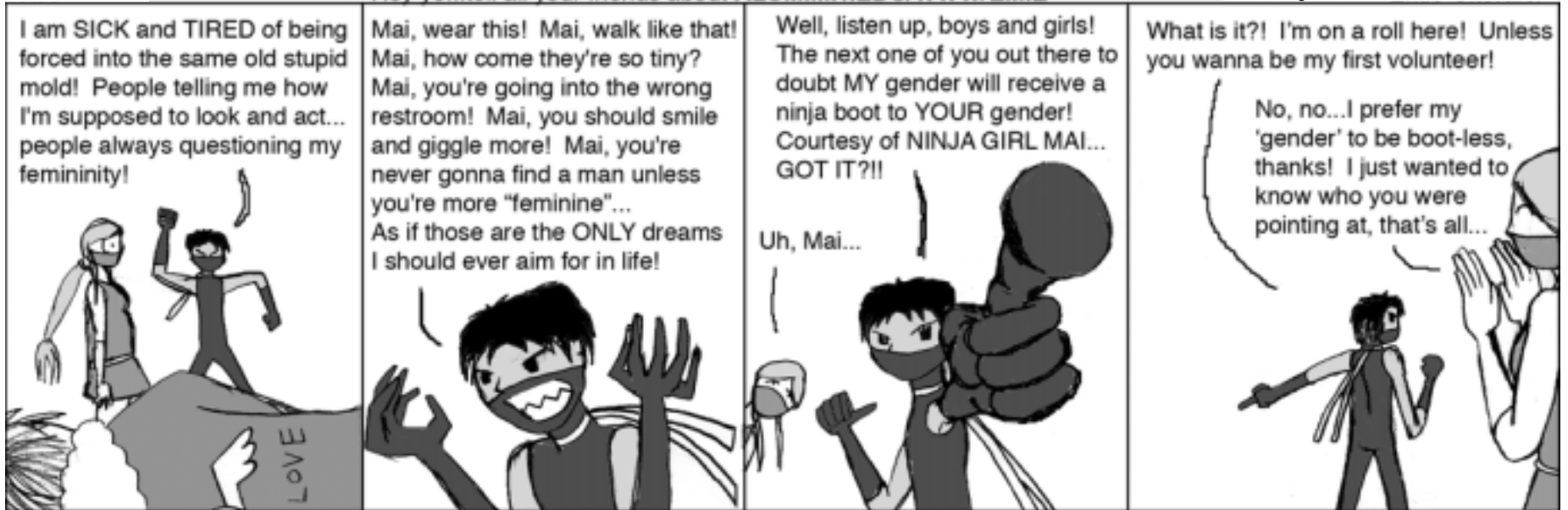
Martin Marks

Senior Lecturer, Music and Theater Arts

Trio

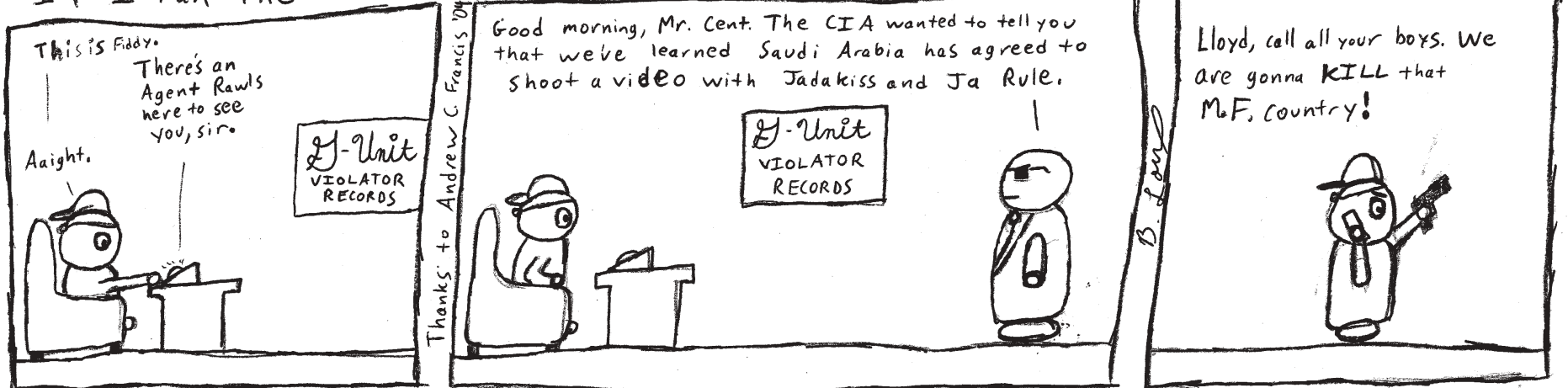
Hey yo...tell all your friends about ALUM.MIT.EDU/WWW/EMIE

by Emezie Okorafor



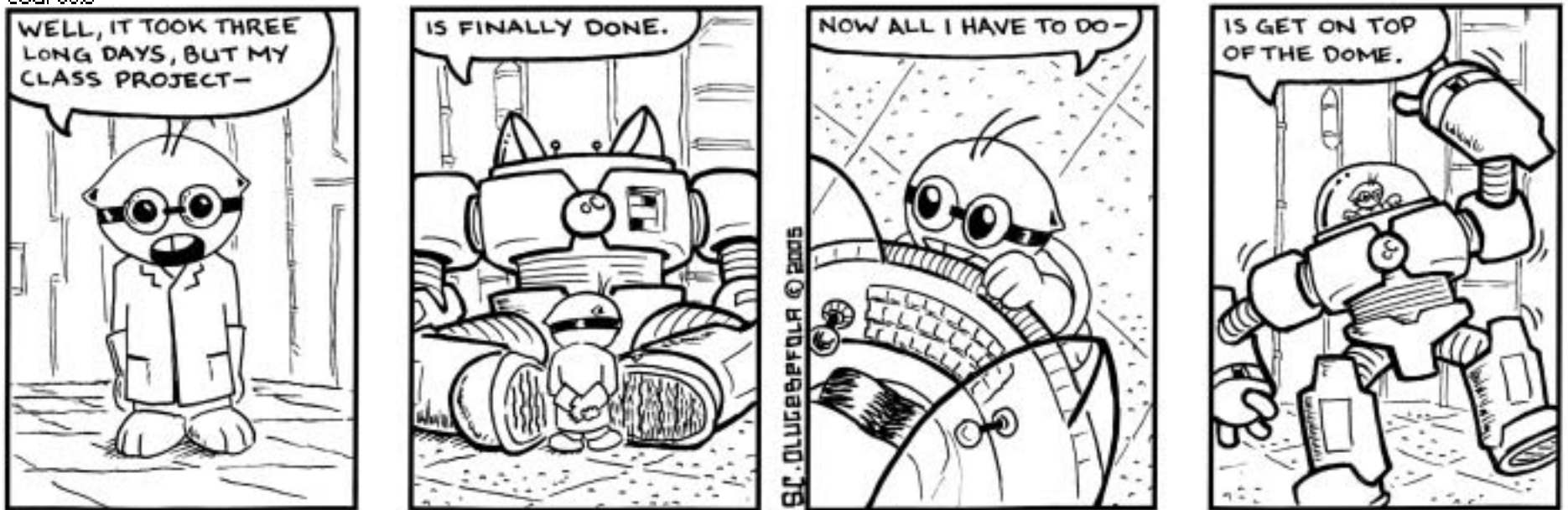
If I ran the CIA...

by Brian Loux



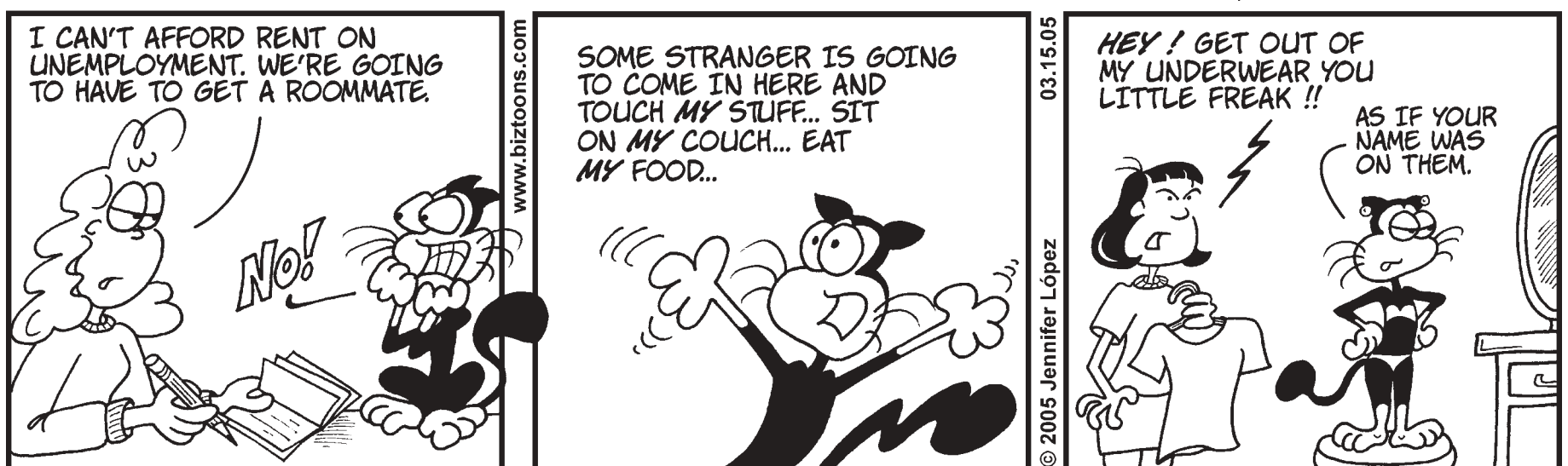
To Kim Wu and her "Politicians like me" posters: Did you even read the last comic? You must be the peoples' champion to win.

COURSE

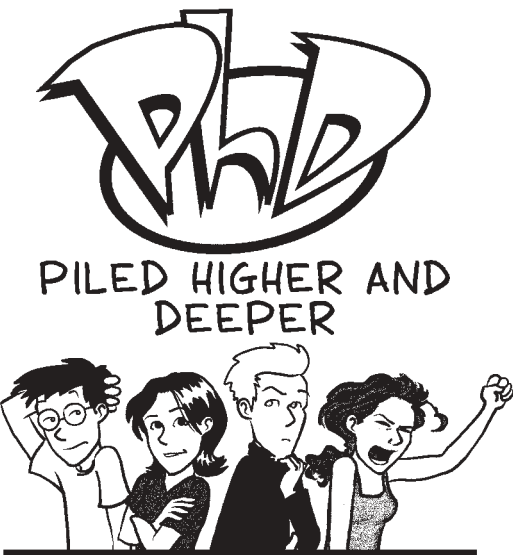


BizToons

BY JENNIFER LÓPEZ



The BizToons book, "You Can't Fire Me, I Still Have Business Cards Left!" is now 15% off at Amazon.com and free shipping!



FoxTrot by Bill Amend

Dilbert® by Scott Adams

KRT Crossword

Solution, page 12

- ACROSS**

 - 1 Current unit, for short
 - 4 Beach toy
 - 8 Shaken instrument
 - 14 Buddy
 - 15 Part of A.M.
 - 16 Beneficial
 - 17 Cool down
 - 18 Astronauts' grp.
 - 19 Start of Jerry Seinfeld quote
 - 20 Biblical mount
 - 22 Whirlpool tub
 - 24 Extinct bird
 - 25 Part 2 of quote
 - 28 "... the twain shall meet"
 - 29 Tiered bric-a-brac shelves
 - 34 Mark Twain and Saki, e.g.
 - 38 Villain's look
 - 39 "The Time Machine"
- people

 - 40 Part 3 of quote
 - 43 Dental exam
 - 44 Spud
 - 46 Ear doctor's instrument
 - 48 Audio equipment
 - 51 With, in Arles
 - 52 Part 4 of quote
 - 57 Stench
 - 61 Natl. interest watchdog
 - 62 Frankie and Cleo
 - 63 End of quote
 - 65 Discomfort
 - 67 Make lace
 - 68 Picture holders
 - 69 Otherwise
 - 70 Mich. in Chicago, e.g.
 - 71 Thoroughfare
 - 72 Ceremony
 - 73 Miles/hour connector
- DOWN**

 - 1 Concerning bees
 - 2 Spreadsheet user's shortcut
 - 3 Guilty and not guilty
 - 4 Cure-all
 - 5 Vehement denunciation
 - 6 Part of TGIF
 - 7 Canine tether
 - 8 "Teenage ___ Ninja Turtles"
 - 9 Hardwood tree
 - 10 Marsh grass
 - 11 '60s hairdo
 - 12 Signaled
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 - 21 More fluid
 - 23 Pizza order
 - 26 Vichy very
 - 27 Xenon or neon
 - 30 Italian dumplings
 - 31 Architect Saarinen
 - 32 Harvest
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 - 34 Strokes
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 - 37 West Coast airport code
 - 41 Provo's place
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 - 60 Coating of ice
 - 64 Spike or Peggy
 - 66 The Greatest

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Come play with our pineapples.
We promise they won't bite.*

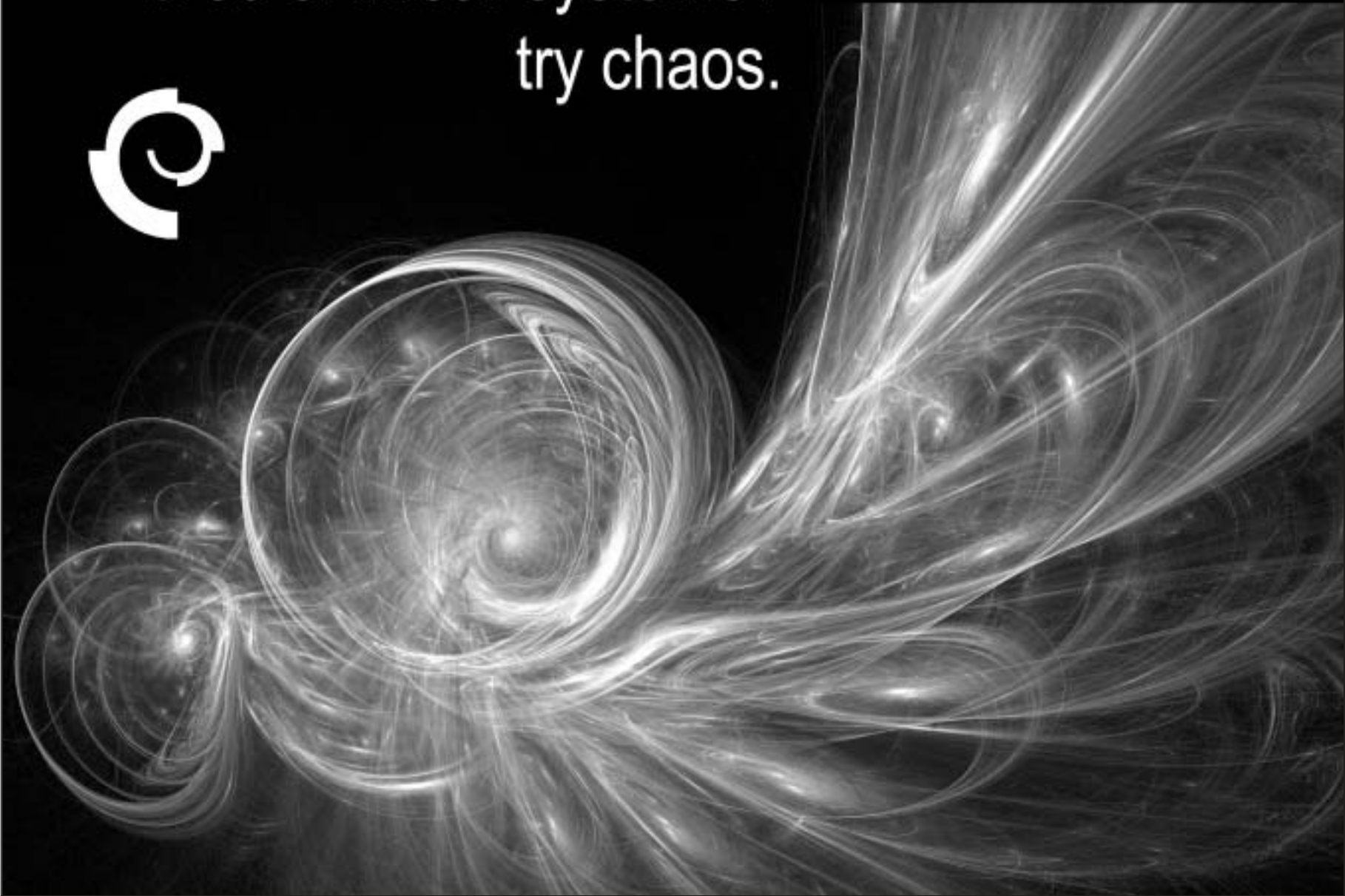
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*We can't actually promise that.

tired of linear systems?
try chaos.

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Cell Phones Outstrip Dorm Phones in Use

Service made optional to avoid rent hike
Phones, from Page 1

The change made by administrators this spring to require the housing system to pay its own way means that if nothing changed, students' rent would rise by \$150 to \$200.

"What has happened is that the cost of telephone services was rather reasonable and was included in the rental" price, Nilsen said. But now, "that cost has gone up dramatically."

"Had we stayed with the current system," she said, MIT "would have had to [go] over and above what we'd normally raise" rents.

"What we've done instead is taken a look at this issue and how phones are being used," she said. A lot of students carry a cell phone now or use the internet to communicate, reducing the need for a dormitory phone, she said.

However, no administrator was able to produce statistics for how much dormitory phone usage varied with owning a cell phone.

"We don't know for sure, but we think it's somewhere between 70 and 80 percent [of students] that use the cell phones," Dolan said, based on extrapolations from a few surveys.

Change causes little pain

Many students agreed that losing

local phone service would not be much of a burden.

"I pretty much entirely use my cell phone," said Maggie Nelson '07, who was not sure if her dormitory phone was broken or not.

She said the impression that most students use cell phones was "fairly accurate" and that the change in service would not have a big impact.

David Gray '07 said he primarily used the dormitory phone, but only two or three times a week. "I don't have a cell now, but that would encourage me to get one," he said, referring to having to pay for service.

Rafael Navarro '08 said that the only time his phone rang was when solicitors were calling, and that he does not use it at all. He said he thought the people who would most dislike the monthly fee are people with families in the nearby area.

Regulations limit subsidy

MIT cannot both subsidize the monthly cost and have students pay monthly bills because of government regulations that set terms on rules for how an institution can charge for services, Dolan said.

The regulations do not require MIT to charge for services, she said, "but if you do charge for services, then you need to treat the campus staff the same as the students. You cannot give students preferential treatment for the same service."

"Therefore we would not be able to charge the student less" for the same service, she said.

Kathy Lin contributed to the reporting of this story.





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Hamentashen Operator Acts on Latke Light in Widening Debate

Debate, from Page 1

president of MIT on their team. Lewin argued that, as confirmed in a phone call he claimed to receive from Summers during his rebuttal, the president of Harvard prefers the hamentashen.

As Summers, who apparently supports the hamentashen, has “no class, no sophistication, poor judgment ... aren’t we fortunate that Susan Hockfield is our president?” he asked.

“I would never, ever eat a hamentashen, and I would not even want to come close to one,” said Hockfield, who claimed that other university presidents she asked also favored the latke. The audience should support the latke, “not only because I am the president ... but simply because the circle is a form vastly superior to the triangle.”

Hockfield argued that the debate came down to a contest “between two geometric forms,” and the circle is a “noble, proud, and perfect” form, making the latke a “potato of power.”

Furthermore, she said, noting that it was Pi Day, “the circle is at

the very heart of MIT,” in the small and large domes, the seal, and even “O”penCourseWare

Latke victim of innate differences

The three defending the hamentashen, unable to claim the vote of Hockfield, instead suggested that Summers supported the latke and that the audience should therefore vote for the hamentashen.

Kastner, in support of the hamentashen, first explained the appearance of the triangular cookie throughout the laws of physics, such as in Maxwell’s Equations as the “hamentashen operator” (frequently misconstrued as the divergence operator); in Hamentashen diagrams, more commonly known as Feynman diagrams; in quarks, which are held together by the strong nuclear force, “which is really the hamentashen;” and in cosmology, as “the universe is really mostly dark hamentashen.”

The latke, however, appears only in string theory, but “most physi-

cists don’t take string theory very seriously,” Kastner said.

Given this confounding inequality between the success of the two foods in physics, Kastner said that he “turned to one expert who gave me his candid opinion,” Summers.

Kastner then displayed a slide reading that “innate differences between hamentashen and latkes might be one reason fewer latkes succeed” in science and mathematics careers.

Sadoway also emphasized that Summers favored the latke, and that he had therefore “come to the conclusion 180 degrees” from that of a “president of a university named after a subway stop.”

Sadoway also argued that the latke “hardens into a monolithic indigestible mass” due to “primary covalent bonding and crosslinking,” while the hamentashen’s “gentle, secondary bonds ... pose no digestive threat.”

Furthermore, Sadoway said, due to high levels of calories, sodium, and cholesterol, “the latke is not health food,” and because of its cooking in oil, “poses an environmental problem.”

Wolfe, who teaches 9.00 (Introduction to Psychology), argued that Freud based his three part model of the ego, superego, and id on the hamentashen. He then questioned Hockfield’s allegiance to the latke, claiming she had previously been inducted into the order of hamentashen for research involving the cookie. Hockfield’s presence on the latke team, then, was clearly a way to reach out to “overserved communities,” when in fact, it is “fairly clear where her loyalties and yours should be,” Wolfe said.

Latke is light

Lewin argued that the debate between latke and hamentashen be subject to “objective scientific scrutiny.”

Lewin claimed that he spoke with a rabbi, who told him “latkes are divine” and “have a magic power.” The light in the miracle of Hanukkah, he said the rabbi told him, “comes from the latkes, not from the oil,” and in Hebrew, latke is equivalent to light.

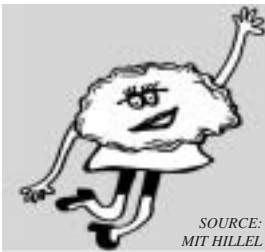
Lewin carried out an experiment in which he verified the light-generating power of the latke, using the latke to brighten a light bulb by moving it through a coil.

“The radiation field of the Latke couples to the coil, and it generates a current which powers the light bulb,” he explained. This scientific research using the latke, he said, has “potential for the Nobel prize,” and three UROP students, two graduate students, and a postdoctoral fellow are working on the project.

Wolfe, however, criticized Lewin’s relation between the latke and light, saying that Lewin “doesn’t understand the difference between metaphor and reality, showing the “need at MIT for HASS distribution subjects.” The idea of the latke as light, he said, “flies in the force of gastrointestinal reason.”

Licht also took a scientific approach to defending the latke. The latke, a potato cooked in oil, “can be viewed structurally as a hydrophilic cavity in a lipid environment,” like the ion channels necessary for cell signaling, he said.

The hamentashen, on the other hand, after a few bites, “is isomorphous to a protein-cleaving enzyme from pathogenic bacteria.” The choice between latke and hamentashen then, is a choice between a life of “productivity and enlightenment” from the latke, or “a slow and painful death” from the hamentashen,” he said.



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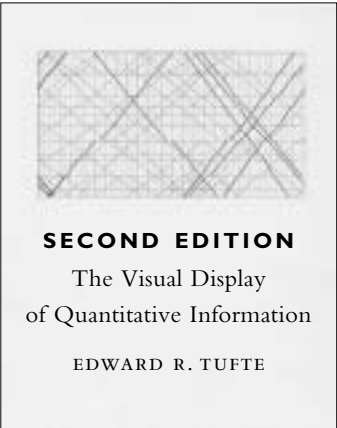


Questions? Email ugprogram@sloan.mit.edu.

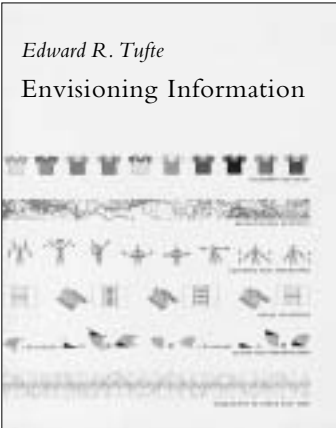


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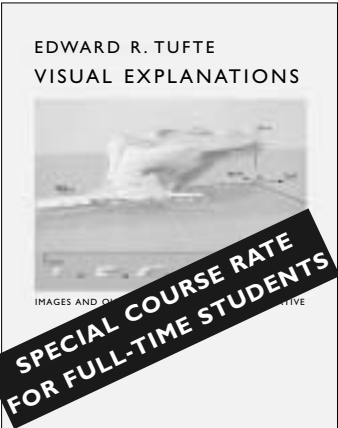
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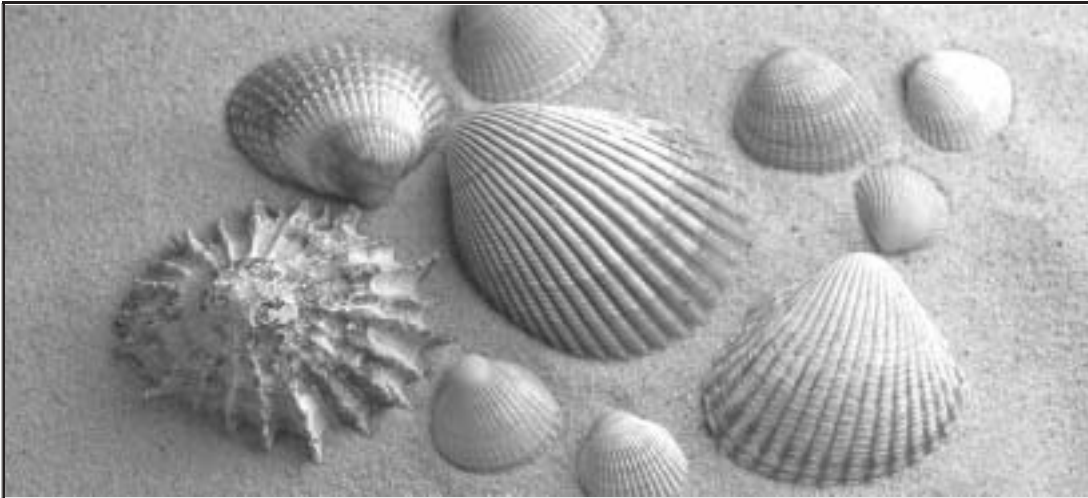
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Essay by Edward Tufte on how PowerPoint presentation slideware corrupts thought. ‘The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint,’ available from Graphics Press, \$7.



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Ask a MedLink

Are headphones safe?

Dear MedLink:My music listening habits are creating a conflict with my roommates’ quieter ways. I sympathize with them and want to buy headphones for my stereo, but I am concerned about warnings that headphones can be harmful to one’s hearing. Can a couple hours of listening a day really lead to deafness in the long run? To what extent are headphones safe? —**Concerned Music Lover**

Dear Concerned: Like you, I’m an avid music listener. And when my neighbors started complaining about the “cacophony” coming from my room, my solution was headphones. But until receiving your question, I hadn’t even thought about potential harmful effects of headphone use. So, thanks for raising the issue!

For help in answering this question, I consulted MIT Medical audiologist Christine Rabinowitz, M.A., CCC-A, and a few Web resources. I was surprised to learn that many portable audio players can be turned up as high as 114 decibels! How loud is that? Well, if you’re at the Kendall Square T station when the subway train grinds to a halt, you’re only being exposed to about 90 dB of sound. And just eight hours of exposure to noise that loud could result in permanent hearing damage.

Still, according to Rabinowitz, there is no risk in using headphones to listen to music—any type of music, for any length of time—as long as the music is played at a comfortable listening level. This is about the level of normal conversation, or around 60 dB. To tell if the sound level is too high, ask your roommates if they hear the music “leaking” from your headphones. If so, it’s probably louder than 60 dB. And if the music sounds distorted, if your ears buzz while listening, or if your hearing feels slightly muffled or you have difficulty understanding speech in noisy places after listening, it’s definitely too loud.

Beware, too, of “listening fatigue”—a perception that the music is getting softer the longer you listen. This phenomenon is caused by a decreasing sensitivity to sound levels over time. Most people respond by turning up the volume little by little as they continue to listen. Avoid this “auditory illusion” with frequent listening breaks to “rest” your ears in a quiet environment. Rabinowitz also warns against headphone use with loud background noise levels—for example, if someone is vacuuming in the same room. “In situations like that, you will automatically increase the volume of the music without realizing that the intensity is too much for your ears,” she says.

Thanks again for raising an important issue, and happy listening! —**Victoria ’06**



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campus mail: Ask A MedLink, E23-405

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Hosted by SIGUS – School of Architecture and Planning
Challenge Information at: web.mit.edu/sigus/www

MBTA Cuts Night Owl Bus Line

By Mac Daniel
THE BOSTON GLOBE

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority avoided another fare increase, but made several service cuts yesterday, as the board of directors approved a new \$1.27 billion operating budget.

The board of the MBTA agreed to raise parking fees 50 cents a day at some subway stations, to cut subsidies to suburban bus lines, to nix the after-hours Night Owl bus service, to end two Inner Harbor ferry routes, and to work with the lowest number of T employees in six years.

Also, the MBTA’s general manager, Michael H. Mulhern, officially announced his retirement on June 1, after 26 years with the agency. Mulhern, who was emotional at times during the announcement, said later

that his departure was partly influenced by a possible job as a vice president for “a very large international engineering firm,” which he declined to name.

The board immediately named a special advisory committee to look into hiring a successor. A plan to choose a new general manager should be in place by April 7.

Mulhern said he had been “absolutely determined to get this organization through a very difficult financial period” before retiring. “And I think we did that,” he said.

The board passed an operating budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1, pledging to maintain core services without imposing another fare increase similar to the systemwide increase two years ago that averaged 25 percent. Still, “fiscal year 2006 will be an extremely diffi-

cult and challenging year,” wrote Jonathan R. Davis in the budget summary.

The MBTA’s advisory board, a separate panel with public oversight of the T, also approved the budget. But it did so with four key concerns, all of which officials said were either addressed in the budget or in Thursday’s introduction of Governor Mitt Romney’s 20-year transportation plan, which pledged state funding for T expansion projects.

The concerns were over expanding the Silver Line into underserved communities, seeking funding for the Central Artery-Tunnel transit commitment projects, increasing commuter rail parking, and improving service on the Worcester-Framingham line.

Davis said the budget included 7,000 new commuter rail parking spaces, 3,000 on the Greenbush line, and 4,000 others systemwide.

The most controversial cuts appeared to be ending the Night Owl, the weekend late-night bus service that was costing the T \$7.53 per rider to run, compared to \$1.37 on the average bus route. Starting July 1, the Night Owl’s cost would have gone higher because of a contract that would have paid drivers \$53 per hour.

Still, supporters pressed to save the service, with Councilor Michael P. Ross, whose district includes the Fenway, calling Night Owl “one heck of a deterrent” when it comes to preventing drunken driving.

Late night revelers “do need an alternative, and we in government need to find alternatives for them, not just hope that they don’t make a tragic mistake,” he told the board.

Overall operating expenses are expected to increase 5.6 percent under new the budget. The T is predicting that an open advertising contract will result in a \$6.5 million decrease in nonfare revenue when bids are opened next week.

To balance its budget, the T is also taking \$10.5 million from its emergency funds, the first time in six years the T has had to dip into its reserves.

“It has been an extraordinarily successful effort” in wrangling the new budget into shape, said Transportation Secretary Daniel A. Grabauskas, who chairs the T board of directors. “Anywhere else in this country that you look, fares have been raised, sometimes twice in a year, core services cut pretty dramatically, so balancing this year ... really has been a herculean effort.”

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UA Student Committee on Educational Policy

Solution to Crossword

from page 7

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P	A	L		A	N	T	E		U	S	E	F	U	L
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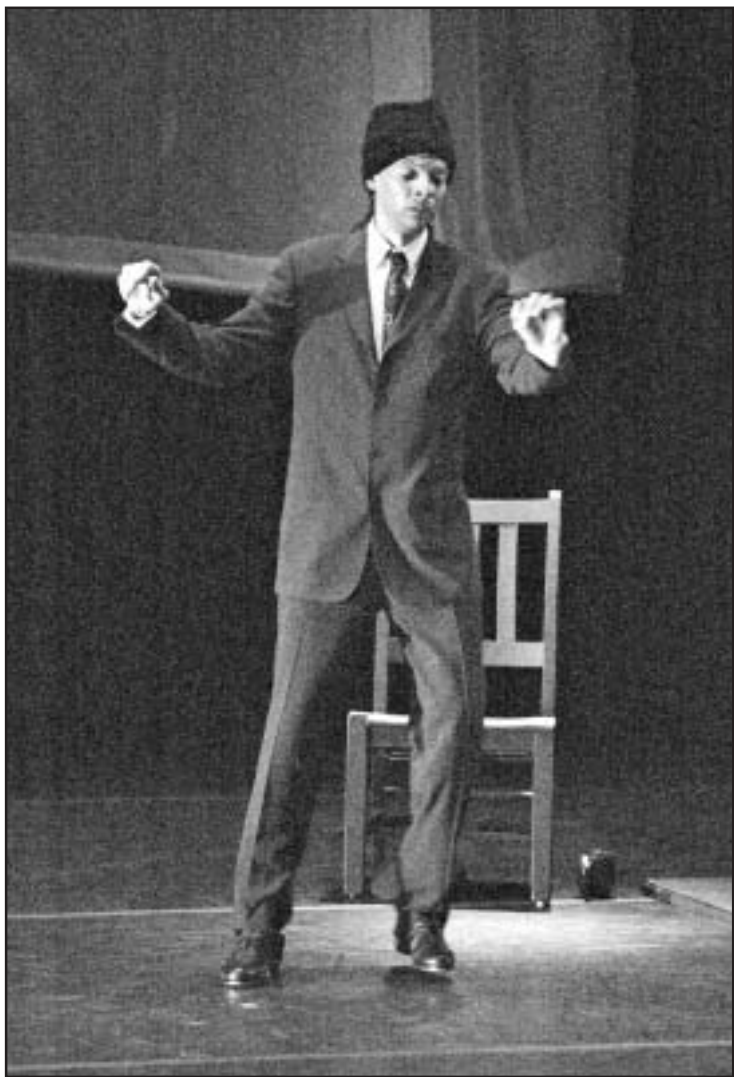
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(above, left) Associate professor Thomas F. DeFrantz taps to his left.
(above, right) DeFrantz pauses at the end of a skit.

Photography by Omari Stephens



A Meditation on Monk

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Global Water Crisis: Myth or Reality?
Peter Rogers, Gordon McKay Professor of Environmental Engineering, Harvard University
April 14, 2005 ♦ 6:00 pm ♦ E51: Tang Center


The Future of Engineering at MIT
Jim Champy, Chairman of Consulting, Perot Systems Corporation
April 21, 2005 ♦ 4:00-5:00 pm ♦ E15-070: Media Lab

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OMARI STEPHENS—THE TECH

Sophomore Brian A. Wilt entertains at the Coffeehouse during an event sponsored by SaveTFP last Friday, March 11. Wilt mixed a diverse program with crowd requests to create an enjoyable evening for attendees.



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Soph. Standing Allows Choice Of Major

Story, from Page 1

instead of ABC/No Record grading. The number of students electing to take sophomore standing lies between the 141 and 93 of 2003 and 2004, respectively. Norman said the drop in 2004 was due to MIT's shift to a more restrictive policy of granting credit for humanities Advanced Placement tests, which meant only a score of 5 would receive credit, rather than a 4 or 5 as in the past. The greater number of freshmen becoming sophomores has not led to students overextending themselves, Norman said, and the change from Pass/Fail grading has generally had a positive impact. "Freshmen living on campus, minimal housing crowding, and the new freshmen grading scheme" have combined to make a positive impact on freshmen and early sophomores, Norman said. "They all happened at the same time and been positive," she said, but "if I were interpreting which had the greatest impact," it would be the grades.

Primary purpose to declare major Despite rare cases of sophomore standing students taking far more units than they would have been able to as freshmen, students declaring sophomore standing differ from other first-years mainly in that they generally choose their majors early, Norman said. This year's junior class, the first to jump ahead in large numbers, has not shown a significant jump in the number of people graduating early, Norman said.

In addition, because of the increase in the number of students who take sophomore standing, "we actually ask the freshmen if they want to stay with the class council that they are entered in," she said. "This year I think we probably have ... 10 students who wanted to join the class council of the class of 2007." "What we say is that they graduate generally with their class," she said. On average, those taking sophomore standing take just over 58 units, with a dozen or so taking six or seven classes, Norman said. In general, most are taking 51 or 54 units, which puts them within the freshman credit limit. Early sophomores, though, choose to declare a major far more often and far more definitively than other first-years. Ninety-four percent of those who declared sophomore standing this year also declared a major, and the number who will change their minds next year is "insignificant," Norman said. "The advantage is to declare a major and get an advisor," she said.

Call for Nominations!

2005 Student Art Awards

LAYA and JEROME B. WIESNER
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The Laya and Jerome B. Wiesner Student Art Awards are presented annually to up to three students (undergraduate or graduate), living groups, organizations or activities for outstanding achievement in and contributions to the arts at MIT. Established in 1979, these awards honor President Emeritus Wiesner and Mrs. Wiesner for their commitment to the arts at MIT. An endowment fund provides a \$1,250 honorarium to each recipient.

<http://web.mit.edu/arts/about/awards/wiesner.html>

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<http://web.mit.edu/arts/about/awards/sudler.html>

Please send nominating letters by Friday March 18, 2005 to:
Susan Cohen, Director, Council for the Arts at MIT- E15-205
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Hockfield Advocates Increase in Funding By U.S. for Research

By Kelley Rivoire
NEWS EDITOR

The United States risks losing its edge in scientific research if federal funding does not increase, said President Susan Hockfield in an interview with *The Financial Times* published on March 7, a rare public statement giving a glimpse into her ideas for MIT's future institutional positions.

Hockfield stressed the importance of funding basic research in order to maintain a pipeline of talented researchers. Hockfield said in the interview that she plans to take advantage of her institutional "bully pulpit" position and will travel to Washington to lobby for increased funding of scientific research.

"The flattening of federal funding for research is a serious problem for all us of us," Hockfield told *The Financial Times*. "The effects of slowing the flow of innovation may not be seen for 15 to 20 years, but will be painfully obvious when they do appear." According to the article, federal

funding on research and development in sectors unrelated to defense has remained steady or decreased each year since 2002.

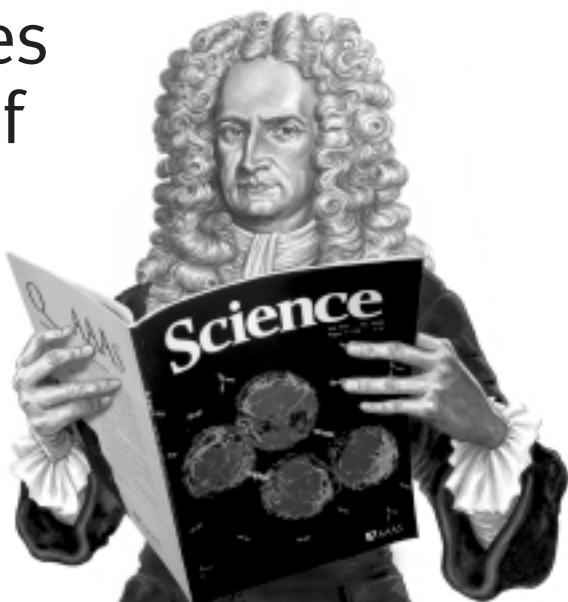
Hockfield emphasized that without funding, the pool of researchers will dry up. "It's dangerous because the innovative economy has to be fueled by talent," she said. "I grew up in the shadow of Sputnik when everyone thought it was wonderful to be involved in math, science, and engineering. This country needs to be re-inspired."

Furthermore, promising scientists may see struggles for funding as a discouraging factor to pursuing research themselves. "When graduate students see their professors' struggles to get the most worthy research funded, it's hard for them to see any future rewards for themselves," Hockfield said.

In addition, as fewer international students come to the U.S. to study science, the country must bridge the gap by refocusing attention to education, Hockfield said in the interview.

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Isaac Newton 1642–1727



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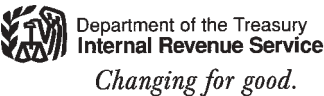
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Men's Vball Wins 20th Game, Ranked 11th

By Travis Johnson
STAFF WRITER

MIT Men's Volleyball achieved its 20th win of the season Wednesday against Mount Ida College.

The Engineers, now 20-4 and ranked 11th in the nation, controlled the match throughout with better execution and more talent both offensively and defensively than the other team. As Paul Dill said, "We kept control of the match even though we sometimes let it get a little closer than maybe I would have liked, but I never thought it was out of control."

The Mustangs of Mount Ida only had seven players dressed, meaning there was only one substitute. They played hard and didn't embarrass themselves but never stood a chance.

Dill had his best lineup in at the start of the first game, and MIT jumped to an 8-1 lead and were able to coast to a 30-16 win.

After a quick start, MIT substituted early and often. "We wanted to get everybody some more playing time ... some more positive experience playing out there," said Dill afterwards.

The second game was a little closer than the first, as the teams played even to a 14-15 score. But MIT's passing and superb hitting prevailed, led by 37 assists from setter Jordan X. Wan '06 and 17 kills by middle-hitter Robert M. McAndrew '05.

A moment of slapstick comedy lightened up the second game



DAVID GANDY—THE TECH

Jordan X. Wan '06 digs a ball during Wednesday's victory over Mount Ida. This marked the 20th win for the Engineers this season, a feat that has not been accomplished since 1987.

when a Mount Ida serve hit an unsuspecting teammate at the net in the back of the head. Both teams clearly laughed under their breaths before play continued.

The third game was another close one early on as MIT trailed 12-15 and later 20-21. But a big block by Robert G. Aspell '06 and Praveen Pamidimukkala '08 put MIT ahead for good.

The win continues what has been an extremely successful sea-

son for MIT volleyball. The latest coach's poll puts them at 11th in the country, and Tuesday's win is unlikely to change that. They have reached 20 wins for the season and are currently one game behind conference leaders Rivier, whom MIT defeated a few weeks ago.

When asked what the biggest factor has been in their success, Coach Dill said, "the ability of the guys to keep their poise out there and stay confident when they're

playing. The work ethic and the discipline they've displayed this season have just been tremendous."

Individually, McAndrew is second in the nation in kills per game and Pamidimukkala is fourth in hitting percentage.

MIT plays this week at Emmanuel and Harvard. They finish up their regular season at home against Johnson and Wales April 2 in DuPont.

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Eligibility

In order to be considered for the Summer RA position, a student must qualify for Summer Housing under the guidelines set out by the Housing Office (see *Student Life Handbook*, pages 53-54). In addition, all applicants must be registered for classes at MIT in the Fall 2005 semester. Graduating seniors will only be considered for the Summer RA position if they have been accepted into an MIT graduate program that will begin in the Fall 2005 semester. Applicants must have lived in an on-campus dorm for a *minimum* of two years. Applicants must currently be in good standing both academically and disciplinarily, and must remain so throughout the term of employment.

Come to an Information Session to learn more :

- € March 15, 3:00-4:00 PM, PDR1/2 in the Student Center
- € March 31, 7:30-8:30 PM, MacGregor Dining
- € April 4, 7:30-8:30 PM, Talbot Lounge, East Campus

For an application and more information, go to our website:
web.mit.edu/residence

UPCOMING HOME EVENTS

Thursday, March 17

Varsity Men's Lacrosse vs. Wentworth
Jack Barry Field, 4 p.m.



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